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REMARKS

In the Office Action, Examiner objected to the drawings for failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) since the reference "780" has been used to designate both a "counter" and a "communication tag" in Figure 7. Accordingly, Applicant has amended the drawing so that the communication tags are designated by reference numbers 780A-780C. Applicant has also amended the specification to be consistent to the amendment in the drawings.

Examiner objected to the drawings for failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) since they include reference signs not mentioned in the description. Accordingly, Applicant has amended the specification to include the reference signs of the components shown in the drawings to overcome this objection.

In the Office Action, Examiner rejected Claims 1, 2, 5, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yabuki (U.S. Patent No. 5,796,351). Accordingly, Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly differentiate the present invention from the technologies shown in the cited references.

The present invention aims to help people with eyesight problems to identify objects without other people's help or with minimum help by others. For this purpose, it is necessary that the article identifying system be simple in operation for use by a visually handicapped person. Further, the article identifying system be provided on a predetermined place and have a flat surface

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so that the handicapped person knows the location of the article identifying system and can easily place the articles thereon. The present invention is designed to achieve these goals.

As defined in the claims, as amended, the essential features of the present invention reside in the fact that (1) the article identifying system has a planar surface having a sufficient area for mounting one or more articles thereon, and (2) the article identifying system is stationarily positioned on a predetermined location throughout the use. According to the present invention, the user, especially, a visually handicapped person, can easily bring one or more objects having communication tags to the article identifying system (information output device) to learn what the objects are because he knows the location of the system and can place the objects on the planar surface of the system.

The technology disclosed in the cited Yabuki reference is directed to a system for providing visitors with information about exhibition objects in exhibition facilities such as museums, trade fairs, zoos, and factories. A user carries a terminal 40 (or 400) in the exhibition facility. The terminal 40 communicates with an exhibition object to specify the object and receives the information about the exhibition object from the control unit of the system. In this way, the system in the cited Yabuki reference allows the user to directly specify an exhibition object, such as an animal in a zoo, about which the user wants information. The

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received information is audibly reproduced by the speaker on the terminal 40.

For achieving the intended function, in the system disclosed by Yabuki, the terminal 40 that specifies the exhibition object must be portable as shown in Fig. 2. This is because the user has to move around in the exhibition facility and correctly point the wireless signal to the desired exhibition object. This requirement is evidenced by the illustration of Fig. 2 as well as the description in the cited Yabuki reference in column 4, lines 4-14 which reads as follows:

If a request signal from the transceiver 43 is received by different exhibition objects, the transponders 51 of these objects will simultaneously return their own identification codes, to confuse the terminal 40. To avoid the confusion, the wireless signal transmitted from the transceiver 43 must be highly directional. In addition, the terminal 40 must be designed so that the user may easily direct an output port of the transceiver 43 toward the transponder 51 of a target exhibition object. Accordingly, the terminal 40 of the present invention is portable as shown in FIG. 2.

However, such a design is disadvantageous to a visually handicapped person who is a user of the article identifying system of the present invention. It is impossible for the visually handicapped person to move around the exhibition facility let alone to correctly point the radio signal to an object in the exhibition facility. He may lose the terminal and will have a hard time finding it. The system of the cited Yabuki reference is so designed that the user can move around and come close to the

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exhibition object to specify the object for receiving the information on the specified object. The article identifying system of the present invention is so designed that the user can always stay at the same location, in a living room for example, where the system is stationarily located. In other words, the cited Yabuki reference teaches away the present invention because the essential purposes and functions contradict to one another.

Moreover, the present invention is provided with a flat surface upon which the user can place an object to be identified. The planar surface has a sufficient area so that the user can easily place one or more objects to be identified thereon. Since the article identifying system is always placed at the same location throughout the use as noted above and has the flat surface having a sufficient space, the handicapped person can easily place the articles on the system. In contrast, the terminal 40 disclosed in the cited Yabuki reference is a handheld device and always changes locations when the user moves. The terminal 40 does not have a planar surface of sufficient area for placing the objects thereon. Therefore, it is impossible to place the objects on the terminal 40.

As discussed above, since the essential features of the present invention are not shown or suggested by the cited Yabuki reference, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is no longer applicable to the present invention.

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Examiner rejected Claims 7, 8, 11 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Dvorak patent (U.S. Patent No. 6,002,334). The cited Dvorak reference discloses a tracking device carried by a user to alert the user when a registered object, such as sunglasses, is away from the tracking device. The tracking device is designed to assist people who have a tendency to forget items temporarily placed at a particular location. To achieve this purpose, the tracking device must be carried by a user to detect whether the user is away from the registered object by a predetermined distance. Thus, in the cited Dvorak reference, the tracking device must be portable as shown in Figs. 2 and 4, and stated at column 2, lines 49-53, as well as at column 3, lines 16-20, which read as follows:

Referring to FIGS. 2 and 3, at location 210, a user 201 is in the vicinity of an item 205 while seated at a desk 203. The user 201 is shown wearing the tracking device 100, which is in the form of a personal communication device that travels with the user as the user moves about. At location 210, the user issues a command identifying the item 205 as a eligible for tracking.

Thus, at location 220, as the user 201 moves away from the desk 203, such that the tracking device 100 is separated from the item 205, the tracking device issues an alert with the item's identifier, thereby identifying the item 205 as being separated from the tracking device.

Thus, it is clear that the tracking device 100 of Dvorak is not designed to be placed stationarily on a predetermined location throughout the use. The tracking device 100 always changes locations when the user moves. Moreover, the tracking device 100

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does not have a flat surface with a sufficient area upon which one or more objects to be identified can be placed. Thus, Dvorak does not anticipate the invention defined in Claim 7 which states that the information output device is "positioned stationarily at a predetermined location during use" and the output device has "a planar surface having a sufficient area on which one or more articles can be placed." Claims 8 and 11 are dependent of Claim 7, thus include all of the limitations of Claim 7 and define the invention with further specificities. Therefore, the invention defined in Claims 8 and 11 are not anticipated by Dvorak as well.

The features of the present invention described above are incorporated in the claims to more particularly distinguish the present invention from the cited Yabuki reference and the cited Dvorak reference. Specifically, as noted above, Claims 1 and 7 now state that the information output device is "positioned stationarily at a predetermined location during use" and the information output device has "a planar surface having a sufficient area upon which one or more articles can be placed." Claims 13 and 14 also incorporate the similar limitations. Therefore, Applicant believes that the rejection under 35 U.S. C. 102 is no longer applicable to the present invention.

The Examiner rejected Claims 3, 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the cited Yabuki reference noted above in view of Tuttle et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,448,110) and Tarlow et

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al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,045,327). The Examiner rejected Claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the cited Dvorak reference noted above in view of the cited Tuttle reference. The Examiner rejected Claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the cited Dvorak reference in view of the cited Tuttle reference and the Yabuki reference. The Examiner rejected Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the cited Yabuki reference in view of the cited Dvorak reference.

All of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) above include either the cited Yabuki reference or the cited Dvorak reference. As discussed above, the present invention defined in Claims 1 and 7 as amended are fully distinguishable from the technology disclosed in the cited Yabuki reference or the cited Dvorak reference. Claims 3, 4, 6 are dependent of Claim 1 either directly or indirectly. Claims 9 and 10, 12 are dependent of Claim 7 either directly or indirectly. Since the dependent claims include all of the limitation in the base claim and define the invention with further specificities, the invention defined in Claims 3, 4, 6, 9, 10 and 12 is not obvious over the cited references taken singly or in combination, because none of the cited references disclose the essential features (1) and (2) of the present invention. Similarly, since Claims 13 and 14 include the limitations directed to the features (1) and (2), and thus not obvious over the cited references taken singly or in combination. Accordingly, Applicant

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believes that rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are no longer applicable to the present invention.

Applicant has added new Claims 15-18 for incorporating the advantages of the present invention which are directed to the use of the record button for updating the voice data. This feature is supported by the descriptions from page 16, line 19 to page 18, line 3. No new matter has been involved in the new claims.

In this opportunity, Applicant has amended the specification to correct minor errors therein and to more clearly describe the present invention. This is to verify that no new matter has been introduced by this amendment.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes that Claims 1-18 are in condition for allowance, and accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the present application be allowed and passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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